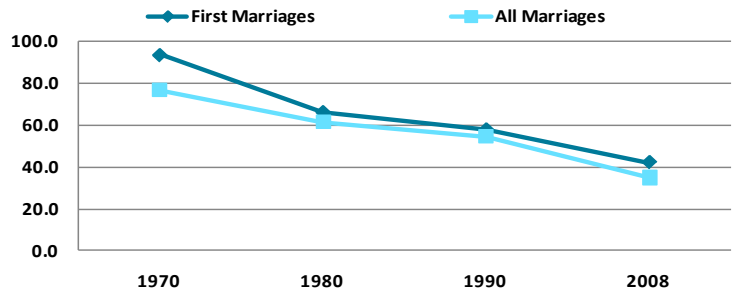


In 2008, the U.S. marriage rate was 34.8 per 1,000 unmarried women 15 years and older (FP-09-01). Not all of these marriages are first marriages; roughly 31% are remarriages. With age at first marriage in the U.S. at a record high of 26 for women, it is important to examine the *first* marriage rate.

Rate of First Marriage in the U.S., 2008

- Since 1970, the rate of first marriage in the U.S. has been declining. This is estimated as the proportion of marriages per 1,000 never-married women aged 15 years and older (Figure 1).
- In 2008, 36.5 million women were never married thus eligible to marry for the *first* time.
 - For every 1,000 never-married women 15 or older in 2008, 42 entered a first marriage in 2008.
 - In 2008, 1.5 million women aged 15 and older were first time brides.

Figure 1. Rate of First Marriages and All Marriages Among Women Aged 15 and Older in the U.S., 1970-2008

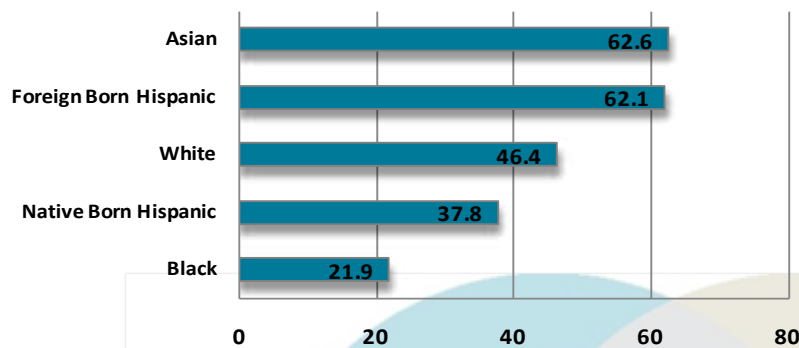


Source: Table No. 149 U.S. National Center for Health Statistics of the United States, Vital Statistics of the United States, annual, Monthly Vital Statistics Report and the U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2008

Variation in the Rate of First Marriage in the U.S. According to Race and Ethnicity, 2008

- Entry into first marriage varied considerably by race and ethnicity. The highest rate of first marriage was among never-married Asian-American women (62.6) followed by foreign born Hispanic women (62.1) and White women (46.4).
 - In 2008, there were nearly 63 first marriages per 1,000 never-married Asian women 15 years and older.
 - The rate of first marriage is lowest among Black women.
 - Only about 22 first marriages per 1,000 never-married Black women occurred in 2008.
- Never-married Asian, Hispanic, and White women are more than twice as likely as never-married Black women to have married for the first time in 2008.

Figure 2. Rate of First Marriages per 1,000 Never-married Women Aged 15 and Older by Race/Ethnicity, 2008



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2008.

Family Profiles examine topics related to NCFMR's core research themes. Data are presented at both the national and state levels using new data sources. Written for both researchers and broad communities, these profiles summarize the latest statistics on U.S. families.

States with the Highest and Lowest Rates of First Marriage in the U.S., 2008

- In North Dakota, roughly 102 women per 1,000 never-married women over the age of 15 married for the first time in 2008. In other words, about 10% of never-married women experienced a first marriage in that year.
- In Washington, DC, less than 3 women per 1,000 never-married women over the age of 15 married for the first time in 2008. In other words, less than 3% of never-married women experience a first marriage in that year.
- For a ranking table with all states organized by quartiles, [click here](#).

Table 1. States with the Highest and Lowest First Marriage Rates per 1,000 Never-married Women Aged 15 and older, 2008

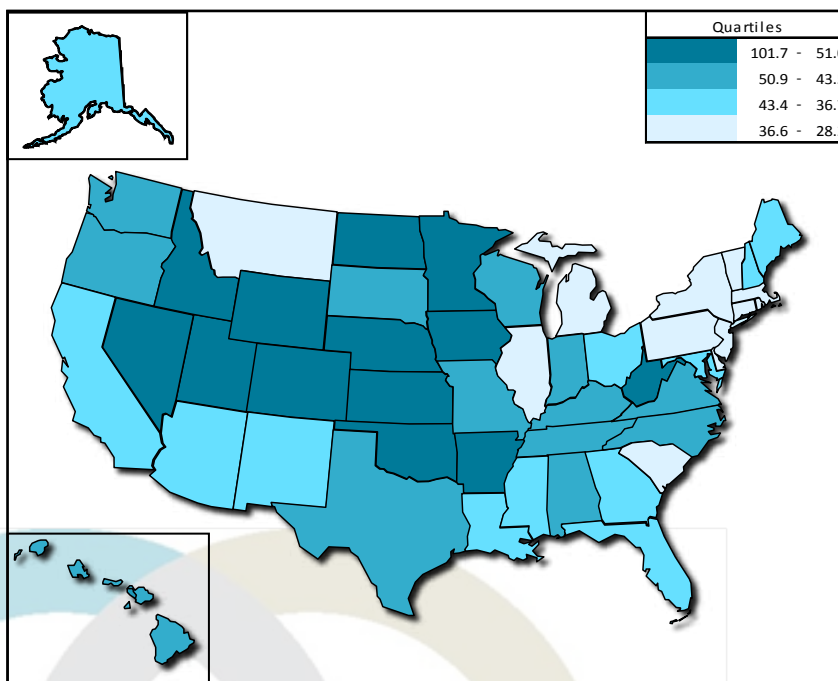
Rank	State	Rate	MOE
1	North Dakota	101.7	+/- 25.5
2	Utah	70.2	+/- 11.7
3	Oklahoma	68.7	+/- 8.5
4	Idaho	64.4	+/- 12.8
5	Nebraska	63.6	+/- 12.6
United States		42.0	+/- 0.7
47	Michigan	31.9	+/- 3.4
48	South Carolina	31.8	+/- 5.0
49	Delaware	30.6	+/- 10.6
50	Massachusetts	28.7	+/- 3.2
51	Wash, DC	28.2	+/- 8.4

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2008

Geographic Variation in the Rate of First Marriage in the U.S., 2008

- States with the highest rates of first marriage are predominately found in the Mid-Western (North Dakota, Nebraska, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota) and the Western (Utah, Idaho, Wyoming, Nevada, Colorado) regions of the U.S.
- States with the lowest rates of first marriage are predominately found in the Eastern Region of the U.S. (Connecticut, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Rhode Island, Vermont, New York, Delaware, Massachusetts).

Figure 3. Geographic Variation in the Rate of First Marriage Among Never-married Women Aged 15 and Older, 2008



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2008

Table 2. Rate of First Marriage per 1,000 Never-married Women Aged 15 and Older by State, Organized by Quartiles, 2008

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Rank	State	Rate	MOE
1	North Dakota	101.7	+/- 25.5
2	Utah	70.2	+/- 11.7
3	Oklahoma	68.7	+/- 8.5
4	Idaho	64.4	+/- 12.8
5	Nebraska	63.6	+/- 12.6
6	Arkansas	60.1	+/- 8.6
7	Iowa	57.9	+/- 10.4
8	Wyoming	57.1	+/- 21.6
9	Nevada	55.2	+/- 9.0
10	Kansas	54.3	+/- 9.3
11	Minnesota	54.2	+/- 5.9
12	Colorado	53.1	+/- 6.3
13	West Virginia	52.4	+/- 11.8
14	Alabama	50.4	+/- 6.0
15	Texas	49.8	+/- 2.9
16	Washington	49.5	+/- 5.3
17	South Dakota	49.3	+/- 19.8
18	Wisconsin	48.8	+/- 6.4
19	Hawaii	48.6	+/- 10.3
20	Kentucky	47.9	+/- 6.4
21	Oregon	47.3	+/- 5.9
22	Missouri	46.7	+/- 5.8
23	Tennessee	45.9	+/- 5.4
24	North Carolina	45.7	+/- 4.4
25	Virginia	45.2	+/- 3.9
26	Indiana	44.3	+/- 4.9
27	New Hampshire	42.5	+/- 11.5
	United States	42.0	+/- 0.7
28	Louisiana	41.9	+/- 6.4
29	Maryland	41.2	+/- 4.7
30	Alaska	41.1	+/- 14.7
30	New Mexico	41.1	+/- 9.1
32	Florida	41.0	+/- 2.5
33	California	40.9	+/- 1.8
34	Maine	40.5	+/- 10.2
35	Georgia	39.9	+/- 3.4
36	Ohio	37.4	+/- 3.1
37	Mississippi	37.0	+/- 6.0
38	Arizona	36.8	+/- 3.7
39	Connecticut	36.1	+/- 5.7
40	Pennsylvania	35.9	+/- 2.8
41	New Jersey	35.5	+/- 3.3
42	Illinois	35.0	+/- 3.1
43	Rhode Island	34.9	+/- 8.6
44	Vermont	32.9	+/- 16.6
45	New York	32.6	+/- 2.2
46	Montana	32.4	+/- 11.3
47	Michigan	31.9	+/- 3.4
48	South Carolina	31.8	+/- 5.0
49	Delaware	30.6	+/- 10.6
50	Massachusetts	28.7	+/- 3.2
51	Wash, DC	28.2	+/- 8.4

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2008

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